

Commendations and Awards

1015.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides general guidelines for recognizing commendable or meritorious acts of members of the Hudson Police Department and individuals from the community. The recognition of personal excellence is an important aspect of this department's activities. Presenting departmental awards for meritorious service provides that recognition, thereby enhancing departmental morale, reinforcing the department's commitment to the maintenance of a high standard of performance by its members, and motivating personnel to perform their duties at the highest possible level. Therefore, it is the policy of this department to recognize and reward meritorious service through an awards program to be administered under the procedures set forth here in.

1015.2 PROCEDURES

A. Recommendations for Awards

- Who may make recommendations - Any department member may recommend another department member for any award. More than one person may make recommendations jointly
- Form of recommendations - Award recommendations shall be neatly typed and shall set forth in detail the circumstances upon which the award is recommended. The recommendation must identify the person or persons making the recommendation and be signed by that person or those persons.
- Supporting documentation - The recommendation form may be accompanied by such supporting documentation as is deemed desirable by the person or persons initiating the recommendation. This documentation may include such items and witness statements, photographs, pertinent departmental incident reports, medical reports, reports from other law enforcement agencies, statements from civilians familiar with the incident, newspaper articles, and any other evidence that will assist the Awards Board in determining the merits of the recommendation.
- Forwarding of Recommendation - The recommendation shall be forwarded to the Police Lieutenant or the appropriate Division within the recommendation is being made.
- Nomination of Private Citizens for Awards - Any member of the department who is given significant assistance by a citizen, or any member of the department who is aware that such assistance has been given to another employee, may nominate that citizen for a Citizen Commendation. Such nominations shall be prepared and forwarded in the manner prescribed for recommendations of departmental personnel.
- Letters from Citizens Commending Department Employees - Letters from citizens commending a departmental employee shall be forwarded to the Lieutenant in command of that employee for review. If the commander concludes that an award to the employee may be justified, he or she shall prepare and forward to the Chief of Police, a recommendation for award in accordance with the procedures set forth in this policy.

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B. Determination of Awards

- All recommendations for departmental awards are to be kept on file pending the decision of command staff regarding the issuance of such award.
- Once the command staff receives a recommendation for award, a meeting of command staff shall take place to examine the circumstances of the recommendation and collect all of the facts pertinent to the case. This fact-finding process may include the hearing of witnesses, the examination of supporting documents submitted with the recommendation, the examination of any other reports prepared in connection with the incident, and, if necessary, field investigation to determine the accuracy of the testimony and documentation submitted.
- The Command staff may make one of the following findings:
 - (a) That the case meets the standards for the award that is the subject of the recommendation, and that the award is therefore approved, or
 - (b) That the circumstances justify recognition, but that it has been determined that the presentation should be for an award other than that specified in the initial recommendation, or
 - (c) that the facts as currently known do not justify an award at this time.
- Only one award shall be made to an individual for any one act, achievement, or period of meritorious service. However, there is no limit to the number of medals, certificates, or letters of recognition that may be awarded to an individual for separate acts..
- The Chief of Police shall maintain an Awards Case file. This file shall contain the copies of each report of deliberations upon each recommendation received. This includes all recommendations for awards to departmental members, together with copies of any supporting documents submitted with the recommendations. The Awards case file shall be maintained alphabetically by employee's names, and shall be open for inspection to any member of the department. Recommendations for commendation of civilians for assistance to the department shall be maintained in a similar manner.

C. Notification of Award

- Personnel for whom departmental awards have been approved shall be notified immediately of the award through the chain of command. In exceptional cases, the notifications may be made directly by the Chief of Police or his or her designee.
- Notices of all departmental awards shall be posted on departmental bulletin boards and noted in appropriate departmental documents or publications.
- All departmental awards shall be made a matter of record in the employee's personnel file. A photocopy of the certificate of award shall be included in the file. All awards shall be considered in connection with future personnel decisions, such as promotion or assignment to a particular duty or location.
- Where appropriate, press releases regarding the departmental awards should be made available to local media representatives.
- A copy of the citizen's letter of commendation shall be forwarded to the employee, another copy shall be placed in the employee's personnel file.

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- Citizens who have received departmental commendations for assistance to the department should be notified in a similar manner.

D. Presentations of Awards

- Presentation of all departmental awards or Certificates of Commendation shall be made at a formal ceremony in front of the City of Hudson Common council at a meeting nearest to the incident spawning the award nomination. Special scheduling attention shall be made to make it possible for the employee's friends and families to be in attendance at that meeting.
- The Chief of Police, when at all possible, shall present the award in front of the City Common Council
- All Personnel not otherwise engaged in duty assignments shall be encouraged to attend the presentation. The recipients supervisors, Lieutenant, and Sergeant, should be present and the ceremony should be scheduled to make this possible. All personnel attending such ceremonies should be properly attired under the guidelines established by the department.
- Members of the recipient's family shall be invited to attend the ceremony and, upon arrival, should be escorted to a position that provides a full view of the proceedings.
- Members of the local press shall be invited to attend presentations of awards of the Medal of Valor, Purple Heart, Award for Meritorious Conduct, Medal of Distinction, and the Life Saving Medal.
- Posthumous awards shall be received by the next of kin. "Next of kin" normally is construed to mean one of the following:
 - (a) Widow or widower
 - (b) Eldest son or daughter
 - (c) Parent
 - (d) Eldest brother or sister
- Posthumous awards may be presented at the memorial or funeral service for that individual or at such other time as is deemed appropriate by the next of kin.
- Letters of Recognition may be presented at a departmental roll call, during a time when as many members of the department can be in attendance or at the discretion of the Chief of Police.
- Commendations to civilians may be presented at a formal Ceremony at the discretion of the Chief of Police, but, only with the prior approval of the citizen concerned.

E. Wearing of awards and service bars

- Medals are not intended for wear on the duty uniform.
- Award and service ribbon bars may be worn on the duty uniform. If worn on the duty uniform, ribbon bars and service bars shall be placed on the uniform as directed by the departmental policy governing the wearing of the uniform.

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- When worn on the duty uniform, multiple ribbon bars shall be displayed in the order of preference of the award, with the highest award being displayed on the employee's upper right.
- Ribbon bars worn on the duty uniform shall be maintained in good condition at all times.
- No medals, ribbons, pins of any type shall be worn on the uniform unless the department specifically authorizes such wear.

1015.3 AWARDS

Awards may be bestowed upon members of the Department and individuals from the community. These awards include:

- 1. Medal of Honor.
 - Posthumously awarded to the family of a department member killed while in the performance of duty. This award will be presented in the form of a medal, and a certificate
- 2. Medal of Valor
 - Awarded to departmental members for conspicuous gallantry while acting in the line of duty. Presented to officers for acts of exceptionally bravery performed at very high risk to their own lives with full awareness of the danger involved. This award will be presented in the form of a medal, a ribbon bar, and a certificate.
- 3. Award for Meritorious Conduct
 - Awarded to departmental members who distinguish themselves in the line of duty by acts of personal bravery not falling within the guidelines for the Medal of Valor. This award will be presented in the form of a ribbon bar, and a certificate.
- 4. Purple Heart
 - Awarded to a member of this department for a wound received in the line of duty, inflicted intentionally by an adversary, resulting in a gunshot wound, severe puncture wound, lacerations, fractures, or concussion being suffered by the officer. This award will be presented in the form of a medal, ribbon bar, and certificate.
- 5. Officer of the Year
 - Awarded upon one officer annually in recognition of those qualities which distinguish him/her as a professional in the field of law enforcement. It shall serve as recognition among fellow officers and the public alike for their

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individual dedication to duty, outstanding job performance, high moral character, professional law enforcement image, and bearing. This award will be presented in the form of a ribbon bar and certificate.

- The Chief of Police or his designee shall solicit names of possible candidates from the members of this agency. The Chief of Police or his designee will then compile additional information by interviews with supervisors and co-workers. Three finalists will be selected and placed on a ballot along with information on each candidate. A vote by all members of this agency will determine the officer to be honored as Officer of the Year. the returns will be kept secret until the time in which the award is presented
- 6. Award for Distinguished Service
 - Awarded to any member of the department for an outstanding job accomplishment that has contributed to a more effective and efficient department. This may involve improved administration, improved operations, substantial cost savings, or other benefits to the department that have materially facilitated the effective performance of the department's mission. This award will be presented in the form of a ribbon bar and a certificate.
- 7. Lifesaving Award.
 - Awarded to any member of this department whose actions directly contribute to saving or significantly prolonging human life. This award will be presented in the form of a ribbon bar and certificate. One ribbon bar will be issued for multiple awards, but a certificate will be issued for all subsequent awards.
- 8. Certificate of Commendation
 - Presented in recognition of a high degree of competence and professionalism in the performance of departmental duties. This includes exemplary conduct during a field incident or operation, outstanding administrative work, the effective handling of a criminal investigation, the organization of a new and beneficial department program, designing and conducting a course of training, and commendable participation in any other activity that improves the department's function or brings credit upon the department in any way. It may also be presented to an employee who has demonstrated long-term excellence in service to the agency. This award will be presented in the form of a certificate and a ribbon bar. One ribbon bar will be issued for multiple Commendations, but a certificate will be issued for subsequent awards.
- 9. Letter of recognition
 - Presented to departmental members who perform their duties in a manner that demonstrates professionalism, devotion to duty, and dedication to the performance of the department's mission. This award may also be presented for the submission of any suggestion subsequently adopted by the department that materially improves the efficiency of the department. This award is presented in the form of a letter to the employee signed by the Chief of Police. First line

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supervisors may make presentations of these awards to officers under their command as approved by the Chief of Police.

Criteria for each award and the selection, presentation and display of any award are determined by the Chief of Police.